

**UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
BDP/EEG - MISSION REPORT SUMMARY**

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REDD

Approved Mission Itinerary:
BKK- Phnom Penh/Mondulkiri – BKK

List of Annexes:

Inclusive Travel Dates:
6 – 9 March 2013

Key counterpart(s) in each location:

- CO – Sovanny Chhum
- REDD+ Taskforce Secretariat – Peter Iversen (Technical Advisor)

Purpose/Objectives of Mission

- Study visit about FPIC;
- Understand the existing efforts to resolve unclear land tenure through indigenous communal land titling, and possible linkages to development of grievance mechanism.

Context

The second national demonstration project for REDD+ in Seima Protection Forest (SPF) of Mondulkiri Province, Cambodia is jointly run by Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and the Cambodia Forestry Administration (FA). The project recently concluded its two-year-long JICA-sponsored FPIC process, with the final signing ceremony on 14 January 2013. It is one of the first cases of FPIC in Cambodia in all sectors.

WCS has worked with government agencies to manage the Seima conservation landscape since 2002. SPF was accepted as the second REDD+ pilot site in 2008, with a focus on management of protected forest and special circumstances of indigenous communities. This was meant to complement the first pilot site in Oddar Meanchey province which focused on community forestry.

The SPF, one of the largest contiguous protected areas with high conservation values, measures 2927km². It is home to 20 villages, mainly Bunong ethnicity. The 2624 families derive their livelihood from cash crops and subsistence shifting agriculture, with forest products and resin contributing between 30 to 50% of their income.

In 2011, WCS and the FA developed a 'Community Consultation Framework' for the site in adherence to the requirements of the Climate, Community and Biodiversity Alliance (CCBA) Standard. In addition, WCS has also developed a Project Document to validate the sale of carbon credits under the Voluntary Carbon Standard (VCS).

Summary of Mission Activities/ Findings

A. FPIC Process

- Conducted in 3 phases: awareness-raising on REDD and climate change with village and village chiefs through a Train the Trainers approach; development of a legally binding agreement between communities and the FA; and signing of community agreement with FA.
- For phase 2, a local Cambodian NGO, the Community Legal Education Centre, was brought in to provide independent legal advice to the communities through a series of commune-level workshops. These workshops were often conducted back-to-back or in parallel with sessions run by FA and WCS.
- FPIC was conducted in 20 villages and consent was given at both family and community levels for the REDD+ project to proceed. Provisions were made in the legal agreement to review consent on an annual basis.
- Indigenous communal titling was provided for in a 2001 Land Law. WCS had earlier identified the need for indigenous land title as the main interest of the villages and helped formed an Indigenous Community Commissions (ICC) that submitted the request for a land title to the provincial authority. The process, which took 9 years, included a participatory boundary mapping and marking exercise between WCS, FA and the villagers.
- The land title, which cannot be sold or exchanged, is granted for residential, agriculture, fallow, spirit,

burial and small tracts of forest areas. With it, the villages have been able to resist external pressure from the military, economic land concessionaires and migrants who were encroaching into their land. It is also seen as an internal measure to strengthen community unity.

- Carbon rights were given to the government of Cambodia, who will then allocate payment received from the sale of the carbon credits to the communities. The exact details of the benefit distribution scheme have yet to be finalised, but is expected to be a combination of quantitative and qualitative benefits to strengthen the 5 capitals of sustainable livelihood: natural, social, physical, financial and human.
- As a result of FPIC and other existing activities, the villagers prioritize forest conservation efforts, which are also supported by alternative livelihoods such as eco-tourism.

B. Challenges

- Costly and lengthy, especially the awareness-raising and consultation stages, due to the wide dispersion of the villages, limited literacy and understanding of Khmer language. The lag time during the drafting of legal agreement also required a renewed awareness-raising effort, adding further to the costs.
- Not every village has a strong legally-recognised local representative organization such as the ICC that can sign legal agreements on behalf of the villagers. For areas without the ICC, and are non-indigenous, civil society representation may be problematic as the organizations need to be recognised by provincial authorities.
- Mixed interests in villages where there are Bunong and Khmer families. The latter tend to be migrants and are not as interested in forest conservation or forest-based livelihood options, which in turn, affected turn out.

C. Bilaterals

- Kim Narong, WCS
 - Discussed efforts to ensure appropriate representatives from the Village Committee are involved in the on-going IP reselection process for the Programme Executive Board and the Consultation Group.
 - Also discussed the possibility of selecting representatives to raise awareness about REDD+ and climate change in other provinces.
 - Invited WCS to share awareness raising materials with the Secretariat, and have them made available from the national REDD+ website. Relevant materials will also be shared through the upcoming regional FPIC repository on UN-REDD website.
 - Encouraged Kim Narong to play a more visible role in the current effort by the NGO Forum on Cambodia to create a strong CSO platform on REDD+.
 - Was informed of an upcoming Workshop on Safeguards and FPIC early April, to be organized by the CSO REDD+ Network.
- Tom Evans, WCS
 - The project needs to set up a grievance mechanism in order to fulfill one of the requirements in the CCBA Standard.
 - Currently, Village Committee (VC) has introduced and enforced rules to address grievances at a local level. When faced with more powerful actors such as the military, the VC has been able to work with the FA. However, doubts were expressed should mining companies enter into the equation.

Follow up actions:

- Discuss with the Secretariat regarding awareness raising materials produced by WCS;
- Explore potential roles the Secretariat and regional team can play in the upcoming Workshop on Safeguards and FPIC;
- Follow up with Secretariat and Facilitation Team regarding the participation of SPF villages in the IP reselection process in Mondulkiri province; and their potential roles raising awareness in other provinces;
- Utilising lessons from SPF to inform future work on designing and piloting a dispute resolution mechanism.

Distribution List:

- UNDP UN-REDD

